

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3347
ANSWERED ON:13.08.2001
FOREST LAND USED FOR NON-FOREST PURPOSE
VILAS BABURAO MUTTEMWAR

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there have been flagrant violations of the forest policy by some unscrupulous elements by putting up buildings or jungle lodge after in the name of eco tourism and for religious purposes; and
- (b) if so, the steps taken to hold consultation with State Governments particularly with Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Bihar for taking concrete measures to protect the forest land?

Answer

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R.BAALU)

(a) Under the provisions of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, any non-forestry use of the forest land requires prior permission of the Central Government. As a matter of policy the construction of buildings and residential houses are not allowed except the construction of small public utility buildings like schools, dispensaries, community halls, etc. Even for such constructions prior approval of the Central Government is necessary. The Central Government has not given any permission for construction of jungle lodges. However, information from the States of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh and Bihar is being sought to the effect whether any such construction has been done without the permission of the Central Government and a statement shall be laid on the Table of the House.

(b) A National Conference of the Ministers of Environment & Forests from all the States was recently held in Coimbatore on 29th and 30th January, 2001 to discuss issues relating to protection, conservation and development of forests. After detailed deliberations, the Conference adopted a resolution, also known as Coimbatore Charter on Environment and Forests, wherein a series of measures have been resolved to be taken for protection and improvement of the environment and forests of the country.